



School of History of Art Research Application Criteria & Guidelines

Applications for research degrees at the School of History of Art should have eight components: seven of these articulate the objectives and scope of your proposed research project; the eighth is a writing sample:

1. Research Proposal (up to 3,000 words)
2. Bibliography
3. Research Summary (500 words)
4. Qualifications and/or Relevant Professional Experience (300 words)
5. Preparedness for Doctoral Project (300 words)
6. Personal Statement (300 words)
7. Assessment of your Supervision & Training Needs (300 words)
8. Writing Sample (minimum 5,000 and maximum 10,000 words)

Please ensure that your application clearly addresses the criteria laid out below. Writing and presentation must be of the highest standard. Ensure that you do not write more than the specified word limit. If you have any questions, please get in touch with the ECA postgraduate office or your prospective supervisor.

1. Research Proposal (no more than 3,000 words)

The following points should be addressed (though not necessarily as separate headings):

AIMS: Clearly explain your aims and objectives. Identify a particular research question or gap in scholarship prompting this research; convey its significance.

CONTEXT: Demonstrate excellent knowledge of the field and preparedness to undertake the proposed research project. Convey the intellectual, academic, artistic context of the research question(s) or concerns.

METHOD: Your proposal must be original and innovative, substantively and/or methodologically. Explain the primary source research and methods that you will apply. Indicate why they are the most appropriate and, if relevant, most innovative methods.

IMPACT: Explain how your research will have reach and significance in academia AND/OR beyond (e.g. by planning for public outreach events, collaborating towards museum displays, curating of an exhibition, having links with industry, and so on).

2. Bibliography

Provide a bibliography of relevant scholarly literature and other key research resources.

3. Research summary (no more than 500 words)

Provide a summary of the full research proposal, including context, method and impact, in clear and concise prose (this should be readily understood by a non-expert).

4. Qualifications and/or Relevant Professional Experience (no more than 300 words)

Provide the following information (as relevant):

- **ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS:** Identify all accredited higher education qualifications; provide classification of results. Where possible, place your results in context (e.g. *summa cum laude*; #2 in a cohort of 250, etc.). If possible, describe your qualifications in relation to either the SCQF (Scottish) or

ECTS (European) qualification credit frameworks. If you are currently a student then provide your Semester 1 results in the form of an academic transcript or signed and stamped academic reference.

- **RELEVANT PRIZES & AWARDS:** Identify all prizes and awards. Again, please place these in context. (e.g. international award, local bursary, etc.) Do not include *irrelevant* prizes or awards.
- **RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:** Please contextualise this in relation to your proposed research. Provide strong evidence of independent research thinking and of high quality research output. Do not include *irrelevant* work experience.

5. Preparedness for Doctoral Project (no more than 300 words)

Building on the previous section, evidence how you are prepared to undertake your proposed research project, in at least one of the following areas:

- (a) Previous study
- (b) Relevant professional experience
- (c) Professional development

6. Personal Statement (no more than 300 words)

Your personal statement must demonstrate awareness of the benefits, expectations and potential for engagement with the considerable research resources of:

- (a) The School of History of Art (wherein you will be based)
- (b) Edinburgh College of Art and The University of Edinburgh
- (c) The Scottish Graduate School for the Arts & Humanities (SGSAH www.sgsah.ac.uk)
- (d) Our relevant non-academic partners and supporters
- (e) Other appropriate research resources in or beyond Scotland.

NB: The Personal Statement *is not* an autobiography.

7. Assessment of your Supervision & Training Needs (no more than 300 words)

There are three components to this section, a) Self-Assessment b) Institutional Assessment c) Identification of Supervisory Team

a) **Self-Assessment:** All research students need training, as the PhD is an ongoing process. You must provide a frank and realistic account of the training you will need and the academic supervision you will require. If relevant, please explain if you require particular technical support (e.g. learning a language). If you have already completed a formal research training programme, please mention this here.

b) **Institutional Assessment:** You must clearly address how *we* can provide *you* with the best possible support available in terms of research training and research opportunities by making reference to the most apposite resources and opportunities offered by:

- The University of Edinburgh and its non-academic partners (UoE)
- Our partners in The Scottish Graduate School for the Arts & Humanities consortium and its non-academic supporters (SGSAH www.sgsah.ac.uk)
- Other training resources or opportunities specific or unique to Scotland.

Checklist:

Investigate the resources of UoE and the SGSAH to determine how your proposal fits with and contributes to relevant:

- Academic Staff research expertise
- Strategic research themes (3 years +)
- Research Groups
- Research Centres
- Non-academic partnerships, outreach programmes and knowledge exchanges (particularly relevant to the impact of your research)

b) Identification of Supervisory Team: We expect you to *at least* identify who you would wish to be your Principal Supervisor in the School of History of Art and have an idea of a further appropriate supervisor; if supervision would be strengthened by including an academic member of staff from one of the institutions in the Scottish Graduate School for the Arts & Humanities, please mention this here.

8. Writing sample (minimum 5,000 and maximum 10,000 words)

We ask you to submit a writing sample with your application so that we can gain a clear sense of your research and communication skills. You should select a piece of written work – whether published or unpublished – that best represents your values and approach. This might include:

- An essay or conversation piece written for a critical audience.
- A selected chapter from your dissertation for a Masters degree. (Do not submit an entire dissertation.)
- A conference paper, whether published or not.
- A published essay or journal article.

Please do not submit more than 10,000 words. A shorter, more focussed essay, or case study is usually a better indication of your abilities.

Applicants are advised to contact the ECA Postgraduate Office ecaresearchdegrees@ed.ac.uk if they have any queries relating to research degrees prior to application.